

Menzies Project: Funding Ongoing Baseline Data Collection With Sustainable Tourism Revenue

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The need for baseline data on physical and biological parameters of the Puget Sound ecosystem is clear to the scientific community. Yet securing funds to support such ongoing monitoring is challenging, especially given recent budget crises from local to national levels. Still, the general public has an innate curiosity about the world around them and has a seemingly insatiable appetite for recreation, entertainment and authentic personal experiences. The Menzies Project mission is to develop a sustainable citizen-based environmental education and monitoring program funded by ecotourism. Named for Archibald Menzies, the naturalist aboard the 1792 Vancouver expedition who kept detailed journals of the voyage, this program continues the tradition of exploration, scientific observation and the joy of discovery. This paper describes the unique program design, marketing approach, initial findings and future direction of this science-based eco-tourism endeavor based in Port Townsend, WA.